



**Submission**

**ACT Budget Priorities 2019-2020**

***Request for ACTCOSS Funding***

**October 2018**

# About ACTCOSS

ACTCOSS acknowledges Canberra has been built on the land of the Ngunnawal people. We pay respects to their Elders and recognise the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and their ongoing contribution to the ACT community.

The ACT Council of Social Service Inc. (ACTCOSS) is the peak representative body for not-for-profit community organisations, people living with disadvantage and low-income citizens of the Territory.

ACTCOSS is a member of the nationwide COSS network, made up of each of the state and territory Councils and the national body, the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS).

ACTCOSS' vision is to live in a fair and equitable community that respects and values diversity, human rights and sustainability and promotes justice, equity, reconciliation and social inclusion.

The membership of the Council includes the majority of community based service providers in the social welfare area, a range of community associations and networks, self-help and consumer groups and interested individuals.

ACTCOSS advises that this document may be publicly distributed, including by placing a copy on our website.

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## Introduction

This submission focuses on the urgent priority for the ACT Government to invest in development of implementation plans for the ACT Community Services Industry Strategy 2016-2026 (Industry Strategy; the Strategy).

The Industry Strategy was developed in partnership between the ACT Government and the community sector, and sets out a vision for an inclusive, equitable and sustainable community services industry in the ACT. To date, funding for development of the Industry Strategy and implementation of the first priorities for action on community service workforce development has been taken out of service delivery via the Community Sector Levy which generated approximately \$670,000 in 2015-17.

This submission seeks \$275,000 from ACT Government from 2019-20 to 2021-22 to support implementation of other projects identified as priorities under the ACT Community Services Industry Workforce Plan 2017-2020, to develop the next two implementation plans, and ensure actions identified in those plans can be progressed.

ACTCOSS played a leadership role in the development of the Industry Strategy and the first phase of its implementation. We are committed to the full implementation of the Strategy work and a lack of funding has been a key barrier to developing the plans to guide the next phases of implementation.

Our leadership and commitment are demonstrated by the alignment of our capability services with Strategy objectives and goals (provided via funding from the ACT Government through a peak body grant) and by chairing and providing policy support to the ACT Community Services Industry Strategy Steering Committee.

For our broader 2019-20 ACT Budget priorities for people living on low incomes and experiencing disadvantage in the ACT and for the ACT community sector, please refer to our *Community Priorities Budget Submission*.

## Investing in Industry Strategy implementation

### Background

The ACT community sector provides valuable support to Canberrans. This support ranges from assisting individuals in times of crisis to building community involvement and participation.

We are the fastest growing labour market in the ACT. Community and health services are projected to grow by 16.6% through to 2020.<sup>1</sup> Currently, these labour markets contribute 24% of jobs growth in the ACT.<sup>2</sup>

Employers in the community services industry welcome and foster diversity (80% have paid staff, 68 of organisations are led by women, 70% of staff have an experience of disadvantage or as a service user).<sup>3</sup>

Community services provide entry-level jobs and a career pathway beyond those entry-level positions. We build human capital and skills as volunteers, as employees and as leaders. We are active collaborators among community organisations and with other sectors (e.g. business, research, education).

We maximise community impact by careful use of resources: 83% make use of volunteers to extend their reach and reduce their costs, 71% of organisations generate income for service delivery from outside of government sources, 20% use shared corporate services.<sup>4</sup>

The sector includes a wide range of not-for-profit community organisations, self-help groups, community associations and consumer advocacy groups. There are approximately 451 not-for-profit community service organisations that are based and operate in the ACT.<sup>5</sup> These organisations employ around 11,000 paid staff and 17,000 volunteers.<sup>6</sup> Approximately \$1.1 billion in income is generated by these organisations, 48% of which is drawn from government.<sup>7</sup> The remaining 52% of income is sourced from philanthropic or other sources of revenue.<sup>8</sup>

Today, its work is being carried out in a climate of unprecedented change. This has been brought about by a range of factors, including:

- Rising salaries as a result of the 2012 Equal Remuneration Order
- Putting resource decisions in the hands of clients through the National Disability Insurance Scheme and a broader increased desire for consumer-centred models of service
- A greater focus by funding agencies on achieving and measuring outcomes

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1 Department of Employment, 2016 Employment Projections, Regional projections – interactive tool, Department of Employment, Canberra, 2016, accessed 30 June 2017, <<http://lmp.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/EmploymentProjections>>.

2 *ibid.*

3 N Cortis & M Blaxland, *The State of the Community Service Sector in the Australian Capital Territory, 2016*, SPRC Report 19/16, Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW Australia, Sydney, 2016, viewed 31 October 2018, <<http://www.actcoss.org.au/publications/advocacy-publications/state-community-service-sector-act-2016-report>>.

4 *ibid.*

5 ACTCOSS analysis of Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) 2016 Annual Information Statement Data, <<https://data.gov.au/dataset/acnc2016ais>>.

6 *ibid.*

7 *ibid.*

8 *ibid.*

- Increasing reliance on new technologies
- The introduction of government initiatives such as the Human Services Blueprint and A Step Up for Our Kids (Out of Home Care Strategy 2015-2020)
- A continued focus to achieve benefits through joined-up service delivery.

These and other changes have implications for how organisations are resourced, what clients expect, and what type of capabilities organisations require. They also present new challenges for organisations to remain viable, responsive and sustainable into the future.

The ACT Government Community Sector Reform Program aims to support the community sector to respond to these changes, including through the development of the ACT Community Services Industry Strategy 2016-2026.

The sector made a major contribution to the formation of the Strategy via the co-contribution levy, a pooled resource that was first announced in July 2012 and extended for a further two years in July 2015, and from financial and other resources provided by the ACT Government.

The Strategy stated that an Innovation Fund was needed to resource key initiatives that should be pursued to build the industry's capabilities to achieve the desired outcomes outlined in the Strategy and improve its overall sustainability.

Implementation of the Strategy can inform development, guide sequencing and ensure effective implementation of a strategic approach to procurement of community services.

Work in the first two years has focused on the workforce plan and projects, and the next stage will involve progressing the research and evaluation, and sustainability stages of the Strategy. ACTCOSS is appropriately positioned to progress this work and an outline of our capacities is at [Attachment A](#).

## Funding

### Contributions outside the ask

The proposal does not seek funds for the existing work of the Director as Chair of the Joint Community Government Reference Group Industry Strategy Steering Group, or for staff time contributing advice and input to government policy consultations or current capability development services, which are funded via the Peak Body Grant from the Community Services Directorate.

Our proposal also assumes ACTCOSS will successfully negotiate with the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD) in relation to the partial reallocation of funding announced in the 2018-19 ACT Budget under the 'More jobs for our growing city – Policy Innovation Team' initiative. We seek sharing of funding from this initiative between CMTEDD and

ACTCOSS. This funding was allocated to build the evaluation capacity of the ACT Government.

Given so much of what the ACT Government would be seeking to evaluate is delivered by non-government organisations ACTCOSS expects this resource would be shared with the community sector to support implementation of the ACT Community Services Industry Strategy 2016-2026 Research and Evaluation Plan.

The funding reallocated from this initiative would be used to resource an ACTCOSS-based Capability Officer to work in partnership with the CMTEDD Officer to jointly build government and non-government capacity to credibly evaluate programs funded and delivered.

The following reallocation of funding from CMTEDD is sought for financial years 2018-22:

Year	Funds to be reallocated
2019-20	\$90,000
2020-21	\$90,000
2021-22	\$90,000
<b>TOTAL (Reallocated Funds)</b>	<b>\$270,000</b>

This funding, outlined at [Attachment B](#), is not included in our Budget ask but needs to be progressed.

### Our asks for the 2019-20 Budget

As we move from planning into implementation across the Strategy, ACTCOSS is requesting funding to undertake relevant research, policy work, sector engagement and capacity building that will support comprehensive implementation of the Industry Strategy.

Our proposal seeks funding for ACTCOSS Policy Officer time, all employment on-costs and administrative cost expenses.

Our proposal also seeks funding to commission the second ACT State of the Community Services Sector Survey, following up on the survey conducted in August 2016 that provided baseline data on organisation governance, financial position, workforce, and demand.

The following new funding is sought for financial years 2018-22:

Year	Funds sought
2019-20	\$155,000
2020-21	\$105,000

2021-22	\$15,000
<b>TOTAL (New Funds)</b>	<b>\$275,000</b>

A breakdown of the streams of work and funds sought is at [Attachment C](#).

## **ACTCOSS delivery capacity**

ACTCOSS is well placed to do this work. We have been involved since 2015 in development of the Industry Strategy. We have broad and active policy and capability engagements with government and non-government stakeholders of the Industry Strategy. ACTCOSS has a role in building shared priorities with other community peak bodies and a demonstrated capacity to leverage existing research, apply insights from other ACTCOSS policy and capability work and collect relevant data to inform Strategy implementation.

ACTCOSS is uniquely placed to align sector development objectives and investments across a number of industry-wide development processes that are relevant to the Industry Strategy. These include: Early Support by Design; workforce development in the Children, Youth and Family Support (CYFS) and Specialist Housing and Homelessness Services (SHHS) programs; Future of Education; Family Safety; Office of Mental Health and Wellbeing; and Restorative Communities.

In addition to this strategic rationale for resourcing ACTCOSS, there are some practical imperatives. ACTCOSS chairs the Joint Community Government Reference Group Industry Strategy Steering Group. During the past 12 months the secretariat services to the Steering Group have been provided by Community Services Directorate staff, and it has been difficult to achieve timely decision-making and task completion with the Chair not directly supervising the secretariat. ACTCOSS staff have a constructive working relationship with key ACT Government officials who will be leading ACT Government stakeholder engagement in the Industry Strategy. This funding will enhance our capacity to work effectively on our shared agenda.

In relation to the request for funding the second ACT State of the Community Services Sector Survey, ACTCOSS independently commissioned and managed the 2016 survey which was conducted by the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) at UNSW. ACTCOSS worked closely with SPRC researchers to design the survey and develop the sampling frame. ACTCOSS retains corporate and sector knowledge gained during the 2016 survey that would enable us to manage this survey again in late 2019. Ensuring comparability with the 2016 survey will be particularly beneficial in terms of tracking change in the sector over the three years since the Industry Strategy was developed.

Attachment B – Reallocated funds table

Reallocated Funds for ATCOSS Capability Officer (outside scope of this submission)			
STREAMS OF WORK	COSTS	FUNDS SOUGHT	TIMELINE
<p><b>Develop the community services industry’s research and evaluation capability.</b> Reallocation of part of funds from CMTEDD’s ‘More jobs for our growing city – Policy Innovation Team’ initiative to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Source and/or develop and disseminate appropriate information, resources and tools to support capability development across the sector</li> <li>• Undertake administrative tasks required to ensure that ACTCOSS training, forums and peer networks are promoted and well run; including development and implementation of a promotional strategy, coordinating and supporting logistics for workshops and forums (i.e. liaising with external providers, catering, setting up room, printing presentations, email follow up, data entry of evaluation forms)</li> <li>• Facilitate and present workshops and training within expertise</li> <li>• Research and initiate projects related to improving capability or building capacity in the community sector</li> <li>• Identify emerging capability and sector development needs through research, evaluation and analysis of stakeholder engagement.</li> </ul>	<p>1.0 FTE \$90,000/year for three years</p>	<p>\$270,000 (reallocated from \$4.7 million forward estimates for CMTEDD Policy Innovation Team for 2019-20, 2020-21 &amp; 2021-22)</p>	<p>July 2019-June 2022</p>

Outline of ACTCOSS Funding Request to Support ACT Community Services Industry Strategy 2016-2026 Implementation (new funds sought)			
STREAMS OF WORK	COSTS	FUNDS SOUGHT	TIMELINE
<b>ACTCOSS Policy Officer</b>			
<p><b>Secretariat to JCGRG Steering Group</b> that provides strategic guidance to and oversight of implementation of the Industry Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting logistics</li> <li>• Preparation of papers</li> <li>• Minutes and follow up on action items</li> <li>• Reports to stakeholders and funders</li> <li>• Correspondence with Minister.</li> </ul>	<p>0.1 FTE Policy Officer \$15,000/year for three years</p>	\$45,000	July 2019-June 2022
<p>Research, stakeholder engagement and policy work to <b>develop remaining implementation plans</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research and Evaluation Plan development</li> <li>• Plan to ensure industry is sustainable to grow to meet needs.</li> </ul>	<p>0.3 FTE Policy Officer \$45,000 for two years</p>	\$90,000	July 2019-June 2021
<p><b>Integration of workforce development</b> across whole-of-government Community Services Industry development agenda, including Early Support by Design, workforce development in CYFS and SHHS programs, Future of Education, Family Safety, Office of Mental Health, and Restorative Communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To maximise tapping into and efficient use of multiple sources of workforce investment resources</li> <li>• Alignment of workforce development agendas, topics, investment and delivery to maximise cross industry access to learning and development, and consistency of knowledge and skills.</li> </ul>	<p>0.3 FTE Policy Officer \$45,000/year for two years</p>	\$90,000	July 2019-June 2021

<b>Second ACT State of the Community Services Sector Survey</b>			
<p>Commissioning and management of <b>second ACT State of the Community Services Sector Survey</b>, incorporating measurement of the collective social and economic impact of the community services industry in the ACT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey design and sampling frame (based on 2016 project)</li> <li>• Methodology for measurement of social and economic impact</li> <li>• Sector engagement</li> <li>• Survey administration</li> <li>• Data analysis, including comparison with 2016 survey results</li> <li>• Preparation of written report.</li> </ul>	<p>Consultant researcher(s) \$50,000</p>	<p>\$50,000</p>	<p>July 2019-June 2020</p>
<p>TOTAL COST (NEW FUNDS)</p>		<p>\$275,000</p>	<p>July 2019-June 2022</p>